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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 005522

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DS/DSS/ITA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/17/2015

TAGS: [PTER PREL IN PK](#)

SUBJECT: INDIAN POLICE DETAIL L-E-T ROLE IN AYODHYA ATTACKS

REF: A. NEW DELHI 5447

[B](#). NEW DELHI 5382

Classified By: Charge Bob Blake for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

[1](#). (C) Summary: Indian police and press sources have broadly outlined the role of Lashkar-e-Taiba (L-e-T) in the July 5 attack on the disputed Ayodhya temple site in Uttar Pradesh. Several suspected accomplices have been detained, the alleged "mastermind" is reported to have returned to Pakistan, and police continue to search for additional suspects who may have assisted in planning the attack. Embassy law enforcement contacts have confirmed details of the media reporting. The revelation of cross-border terrorist links in the attack will increase PM Manmohan Singh's motivation to secure evidence of US support in fighting Pakistan-based terrorism. End Summary.

[2](#). (U) Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) police outlined through press conferences and media leaks from July 15-17 the probable events leading to the July 5 storming of the disputed temple/mosque site in Ayodhya in which the five attackers were killed. UP police have identified two of the dead terrorists, and arrested two J&K residents for providing support to the operation.

Weapons' Path: Kashmir, Haryana, New Delhi, UP

[3](#). (U) Investigators reportedly found a mobile phone (without its SIM card) with the slain terrorists, and used the handset serial number to trace the phone to its purchaser in Srinagar, an alleged L-e-T member named Mohammed Naseem. Police matched the sale records to the mobile phone account to trace calls made from the phone to several numbers in J&K and elsewhere in India and Pakistan. After determining that the terrorists had called him on the morning of the attack, police arrested a J&K resident named Asif Iqbal AKA Farooq, who confessed to accepting 100,000 rupees to transport the weapons and explosives from Poonch (near the LOC in Kashmir) to Panipat (Haryana), using the funds to purchase an SUV and add a hidden compartment. Farooq allegedly delivered the weapons to New Delhi-based L-e-T members at Panipat, Haryana on June 4. Police are unsure of how the terrorists hid and transported the weapons from Panipat to New Delhi and Akbarpur, near Ayodhya.

[4](#). (U) According to police, the attack planners were local L-e-T operative Adnan, believed to be still at large in J&K, and L-e-T area commander Saifullah Qari, who reportedly returned to his hometown in Sindh (Pakistan) following the attack after arriving in Poonch (J&K) in 2004. Police believe that operational planning took place in Poonch.

Attackers Lived in Delhi for a Year

[5](#). (U) Police said that the attack leader (identified as Yunus) arrived in New Delhi from J&K in August 2004, and with a 19-year-old accomplice named Mehmood rented apartments and conducted reconnaissance of the Ayodhya site. In January 2005, four other attackers joined them at two apartments in New Delhi. Police believe that the four new arrivals and Yunus were the assailants in Ayodhya, and are continuing to search for Mehmood. Media reports stated that at least some of the attackers were from Sindh, as they spoke Sindhi according to witnesses in Ayodhya. Police are investigating claims that they crossed the Pakistani border in Gujarat state.

[6](#). (U) From June 24-30, five of the six New Delhi-based group traveled by way of Saharanpur, UP to Akbarpur, UP, where they resided until the July 5 attack. Police are unaware of the movements of the sixth man, Mehmood, after June 24. The attackers conducted surveillance of their Ayodhya target from July 2-5.

Police Confirmation

[7](#). (C) The UP Police Deputy Inspector General for Intelligence confirmed to us that the press reporting was accurate, and told us that Farooq, the J&K detainee, had

"openly claimed" to be a member of L-e-T. The DIG said that the focus of the police investigation now is tracking the movement of the weapons and vehicles to Ayodhya, and identifying additional residences used by the attackers in their travels in order to turn up other accomplices.

Comment

18. (C) Although the GOI was circumspect immediately following the attack (Ref A), the official confirmation that this was an L-e-T plot with Pakistani links has increased the pressure on New Delhi to respond. The PM has already stated that these types of attacks could disrupt the Indo-Pak dialogue, and combined with reports of rising infiltration across the LOC, the good will generated by the people-to-people measures of the past few months is beginning to fade (Ref B). Indian commentators have juxtaposed the July 5 temple attack and the July 7 London bombings, both with links to Pakistan, to call for the rest of the world to recognize terrorism in India as part of the global war on terror. PM Manmohan Singh will likely draw attention to this connection in his meetings in Washington this week.

BLAKE